Electric Sector Pledge to Support School Bus Electrification

**Background**
School districts around the country are gearing up to take advantage of the EPA’s Clean School Bus Program – an unprecedented $5 billion investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to replace old diesel school buses with healthier and cleaner electric and lower-emissions models. The first round of EPA rebates announced on October 26, 2022, nearly doubled the planned funding amount and made $965 million available to fund more than 2,500 clean school buses – 95 percent of which will be electric. One of the primary barriers that school districts are facing is uncertainty around charging infrastructure and how to engage with electric companies.

With their proven ability to execute and deploy electric infrastructure at scale, electric companies are uniquely positioned to make the investments needed to power and help school districts deploy electric school buses and the supporting infrastructure. Electric companies are already rising to the challenge in states across the country, using their existing school bus programs to address pollution concerns in their local communities.

**Actions Electric Companies Can Take**
Successful adoption of electric school buses will require collaboration between school districts and electric companies and third-party vendors to ensure school bus depots and parking lots are equipped with the proper electric charging infrastructure. To ensure the success of this vital program, EPA, Edison Electric Institute (EEI) members, and the Beneficial Electrification League (BEL) partners will work with school districts to take the following steps:

- **Facilitate Communication Between Electric Providers and School Districts:** Establishing channels of communication between the electric company and school district to answer questions throughout the electrification process is critical. Open communication channels have been successful in coordinating industry-wide mutual assistance and can help here. Specifically, EEI will identify specific points of contact among their member providers to help school districts connect with the appropriate individuals at each company. School districts that received 2022 rebates can reach out to CleanSchoolBusTA@nrel.gov or CleanSchoolBus@epa.gov to identify their appropriate point of contact.

- **Provide Technical Support and Assistance:** School districts will need help with a variety of technical issues, including guidance on existing rate structures (including EV-specific rates), interconnection requirements, costs and timelines, and identifying the right type of charging infrastructure to meet their needs. Specific actions EEI members and the BEL network will take to proactively support school districts include but are not limited to:
  - Provide guidance on deploying vehicle-grid integration technology, battery storage, or renewable energy solutions that are compatible with the electric company’s requirements.
  - Develop tools that help school districts identify where school bus charging equipment can be deployed with little or no distribution upgrades.
Identify opportunities for infrastructure future proofing and assist with long-range electrification planning.

Plan for energy grid resiliency and emergency response capabilities of electric school buses.

**Working Together to Increase Funding and Deployment:** EEI and BEL utility partners will work with EPA to collectively seek ways to increase the impact of existing programs and launch new programs to provide advisory services and supporting infrastructure, working together with state economic and environmental regulators to ensure that all available funding avenues are available to deploy electric school buses.

Electric providers already are working with school districts across the country on electric school bus deployment and will continue to do so. Sharing best practices will help all communities benefit from the learnings of early-movers and streamline deployment.